

(a) whether export order worth crores of rupees for brass handicrafts are in jeopardy;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) to (c). It is evident from the export figures given below that the value of exports of metalware (including brassware) has gone up considerably:—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Value in Rs. crores (Provisional)</i>
1989-90	Rs. 124.73
190-91	Rs. 235.78
1991-92	Rs. 324.54

(April - Feb. 92)

Hence it is difficult to foresee that export orders for brass handicrafts worth crores of rupees may be in jeopardy.

While an increase in the import duty on copper and zinc may marginally affect the cost of production of brass handicrafts, it may be mentioned that such increase of excise/custom duty is generally compensated under the duty draw-back scheme. The exporters of metalware are at present entitled to receive duty draw-backed @ 24% of FOB value subject to a maximum of Rs. 37 per kg. w.e.f. 24.10.91.

Widening of N.H. No. 5

6987. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the widening work on the Cuttack and Bhubaneswar section of National Highway No. 5 has been delayed considerably;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken to expedite the widening work and

(d) the year by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c). Four-laning of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Section of N.H. No. 5 in Orissa is included in the proposed Second World Bank National Highway loan. Negotiations for the loan have been completed, but the World Bank is yet to sign the loan. However, meantime preliminary actions as regards prequalification of contractors, finalisation of tender documents etc. are under way in consultation with the Bank.

(d) Since bidding process for the project has not yet started, it is too early to say when the work of four-laning will be completed.

Export of Marine Food

6988. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a vast scope for increasing marine food export;

(b) if so, the steps taken to increase the yield of marine food for export;

(c) the technology proposed to be adopted and upgraded in Eighth Five Year Plan for growth in the exports; and

(d) the additional cold storage facilities proposed to be provided during the eighth five year plan for the preservation of marine products?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) MPEDA is implementing several schemes to encourage aquaculture and diversified fishing to augment export production.

(c) MPEDA is implementing several schemes for modernising Indian Seafood Industry and to export value added items. These schemes will be continued in the Eighth Five Year Plan period also.

(d) Cold Storages are established by private entrepreneurs. As of today, there is sufficient capacity available in the country. Any proposal for establishment of cold storage would be examined on merits.

External Debt

6989. SHIR JEEWAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage increase registered in the Government and private borrowings and the details of external debt in foreign exchange;

(b) the amount of money that was to be paid to repay the external debt upto December 31, 1991 and the amount that has been paid; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Govern-

ment to maintain the balance of payment schedule and to bring about drastic cut in the wasteful Governmental expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). The external debt outstanding on account of Government borrowings has registered an increase of 26.49 percent during 1990-91 over that of 1989-90 while the debt outstanding on account of external commercial borrowings has registered an increase of 21.03 percent during 1990-91 over that of 1989-90. The external loans are being repaid on due dates according to terms and conditions of each loan. The currency-wise details of external debt outstanding as on 31.3.91 and the amount of external debt repaid upto December 1991 during the year 1991-92 is given in the statement attached.

(c) The steps taken to maintain the Balance of Payments schedule include Liberalised Exchange Rate Management System (LERMS), Trade Policy reforms, easier access to imports particularly for import intensive exports, maximisation of foreign aid utilisation and arrangements for meeting the financing needs arising out of current account deficit, through the capital inflows. Government have also taken a number of steps to bring about improvements in revenue receipts and domestic savings, eliminate inessential and low priority expenditure, closely monitor administrative expenditures and exercise careful scrutiny of all ongoing programmes so as to ensure that it does not exceed budgetary targets. Details of other important measures taken in this regard are contained in the Finance Minister's Budget speech.